

Provenance report regarding Indische vlag (flag)

Klaas Stutje


	Custodian	Rijksmuseum Amsterdam
	Current possessor	Dutch State
	Inventory number	NG-1977-279-15-1
	Material/technique	Cotton
	Measurements	275 x 122 cm

Photo: Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (Inv.no. NG-1977-279-15-1)

Summary of findings

This research confirms information on inventory cards from Museum Bronbeek and the Rijksmuseum that this flag was donated in 1870 by Major Christoffel Fredrik Koch (1822-1877) to Bronbeek, after being captured by his subordinates on 28 September 1861 from *benteng* Ramonia near the village of Ampah in South Kalimantan, Indonesia. The inventory cards claim that the flag belonged to troops of Hidayatullah (1822-1903), but an analysis of the military context in September 1861 and the symbolism on the flag indicates that it was captured from troops loyal to Surapati (?-1875) and Antasari (1797-1862).

On the basis of our provenance research and object analysis, we reject the hypothesis that the flag was related to the conquest of Lambadak in Aceh in 1877, as was stated in an 1881 memorial volume about Bronbeek by Johannes Smits. The colour and features of the flag and the symbol of the red ribbon are consistent with contemporary sources about the conquest of Ramonia.

Reconstruction provenance

[no date] - 28 September 1861

Defenders of *benteng* Ramonia

G. Luchtmans, "Militaire Geneeskunde, a. Verslag van den togt der kolonne van Vloten," *Geneeskundig Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch Indië* X (1863).

28 September 1861 - October 1870

Major Christoffel Fredrik Koch

NL-HaNA, KdK 1841-1897, 2.02.04, inv.no. 1894, 7 April no. 8, *Driemaandelijksch verslag van het Koloniaal Militair Invalidenhuis*.

October 1870 - 1977

Museum Bronbeek

Rijksmuseum, Inventarisboek Geschiedenis 1977-1995, letter of W.R. Van der Weide to J.B. Kist, 14 October 1977 no. 72/77.

1977 - today

Rijksmuseum Amsterdam

Object information

Rijksmuseum object number NG-1977-279-15-1 is a cotton flag of 275 x 122 cm, of which only one side is visible. Between 2002 and 2004, the other side of the flag is affixed to white supporting tissue for reasons of conservation. The flag is rectangular shaped, with two lengthened flag ends. Over time, the colours of the flag have faded. Today, the centre part of the flag is brown-green, with a yellow and a red lower- and upper margin. The green coloured field is decorated with a red crescent, a red-yellow eight pointed star, and a red ribbon.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, the crescent in combination with a five or eight pointed star was a common symbol in the Islamic world and was ultimately related to the flags of the Ottoman Caliphate.¹ While the five pointed star gradually gained dominance in the Ottoman Empire, the eight-pointed star remained in use in the Indonesian archipelago, indicating the eight directions on the compass. The meaning of the red ribbon is less self-evident. It reminds of the well-known Zulfiqar, the scissor-like double bladed sword of Ali ibn Abi Talib, which is often depicted on flags in the Malay world. But Zulfiqar symbols on contemporary flags in the Banjarmasin area were usually depicted more graphically.² As we will further discuss below, the ribbon is more probably a stylised combination of the Arabic letters *lam* and *alif*, and refer to the first word of the Islamic confession of faith (*shahada*) or to the name of Allah himself (*lam jalalah*).³

¹ Amrita Malhi, "'We Hope to Raise the Bendera Stambul': British Forward Movement and the Caliphate on the Malay Peninsula," in *From Anatolia to Aceh: Ottomans, Turks and Southeast Asia*, ed. A.C.S. Peacock and Annabel The Gallop (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 221-240.

² Mohd Zahamri, "Ikonografi Zulfikar dalam Sejarah Hubungan Turki dan Nusantara," *Suhuf* 4, no. 1 (2011): 111-141. See for instance NMVW object number RV-225-10b.

³ These theories were put forward by the Dutch professor of contemporary Muslim societies, Martin van Bruinessen, in private correspondence with team member Mirjam Shatanawi (17 January 2021), and by the Indonesian historian and expert of Banjarese history, society, and culture, Sammy Mansyur, in correspondence with the author, 9 April 2021.



Photos 1 and 2: Back side of the flag and cutout with symbols (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam)

The usage of flags in the Indonesian archipelago, and the Malay world in general, was very common, especially in relation to maritime trade, dynastic and religious ceremonies, and warfare. Different rulers habitually carried their own type of flag, and there was a large degree of standardisation. The shapes, colours, and symbols carried meaning, often as a reference to religious and dynastic allegiance. Moreover, in the context of battles, specific flags and banners could be spiritually endowed. Flags such as this one could inspire the troops, and when a flag was damaged or captured this was a meaningful sign of misfortune.⁴ The Dutch were well aware of the regional importance of flags in the dynastic and commercial realm of Nusantara, resulting in several attempts at taking inventories and making categorisations of flags in the region.⁵ Flags were also habitually taken from the battlefield as tangible symbols of victory. This is why many flags were ultimately sent off to the Netherlands, where, for instance, the Ridderzaal in The Hague and the Royal Palace in Amsterdam were decorated with captured flags from the Indonesian archipelago.⁶ Today, flags from the Indonesian archipelago can be found in several museums in the Netherlands.

Provenance report

This flag (numbered NG-1977-279-15-1) and its flagpole (NG-1977-279-15-2) belong to a collection of 27 (fragments of) flags and 25 flagpoles and pikes in the Rijksmuseum (see NG-1977-279- series). In the museum's information system, Adlib, these flags are ascribed to different parts of the Indonesian archipelago, mostly to Aceh, West Kalimantan, Southeast Kalimantan, and Sulawesi. Over time, the flags have been renumbered several times. According to the digital museum system and archival documentation, flag number NG-1977-279-15-1 corresponds with the old Rijksmuseum number BR-NG-51, with Bronbeek number 1470, and with conservation number Br9. Original number tags exist but they are kept in a separate dossier.⁷

The collection arrived in the Rijksmuseum in 1977, coming from Museum Bronbeek in Arnhem. Bronbeek was established in 1863 as a home for veterans of the colonial army, and after 1970 for all pensioned military. With donations from veterans, sympathisers and institutions such as the Ministry of

⁴ See for instance: H.G.J.L. Meijners, "Gevecht te Soengei-Kawattan," *Militaire Spectator, Tijdschrift voor het Nederlandsche leger* (1880): 385-393, 390.

⁵ "Carte des Pavillons en usage chez les différents peuples des Indes Orientales Néerlandaises," (Batavia: Topografisch bureau, 1865); bibliography D. Rühl, "Vlaggen van den Oost-Indischen Archipel (1600-1942)," *Jaarboek van het Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie* 6 (1952): 147-148.

⁶ Mariska Pool, "Vergeten vlaggen: de trofeeën van het eskader-Van Braam in de Indische Archipel, 1784," *Armamentaria, Jaarboek Legermuseum* 36 (2001): 50-72.

⁷ Rijksmuseum, Afdeling Collectie Informatie en Archief, Objectmap NG-1977-279-.

Colonies Bronbeek established a large collection of war trophies and artefacts from the colonial empire, which forms the basis of today's Museum Bronbeek. The relocation of 1977 was the result of an agreement between Rijksmuseum director of Dutch history, J.B. Kist (1933-2003), and deputy commander W.R. Van der Weide (?-?) of Bronbeek. With the removal of the flags, the latter probably anticipated a forthcoming closure of the institute by the State Secretary for Defence.⁸ The number of inhabitant veterans was dwindling and maintenance costs were high. After protests from veterans and in parliament, the closure of the veterans home and museum was averted. However, by then the flags had already been transported to the Rijksmuseum. With regards to the formal ownership of the flags, there has been recent confusion. In a letter of 14 October 1977, Van der Weide proposed Kist to make a definitive certificate of transfer.⁹ To date, this certificate has not been found in Bronbeek and the Rijksmuseum, and the status of this transfer is questioned by curators of both museums.¹⁰

With the letter from Van der Weide to Kist came a full list of the flags with brief information about their provenance, numbered according to the Bronbeek system. Flag number 1470, which corresponds with flag number NG-1977-279-15-1, was reportedly donated in October 1870 by Lieutenant Colonel C.F. Koch, and conquered at "Fort Romanio" on 28 September 1861. According to an inventory card of Bronbeek made in April 1965 after a thorough restoration effort, the flag was seized from "Pangeran Hijdajat, a rebel in Southeast Borneo."¹¹ These details — the donation by Koch, the conquest of "Fort Romanio" and "Pangeran Hijdajat" as its original owner — seem to provide us with important indications to the provenance of flag number NG-1977-279-15-1.

Koch and the flag from *Benteng Ramonia*

The donation of Koch is confirmed in the quarterly report of April 1871 of the commander of Bronbeek to the King's Cabinet. In this report, the commander wrote: "From the retired Lieutenant Colonel Ch.F. Koch, residing in The Hague, [the Museum received] four rifles, two blunderbusses from the Passoema lands, besides three flags of which two belong to the Expedition against the Chinese rebels in 1854 on Borneo's West coast and one to Pangeran Hijdajit, chief rebel on Borneo's South and East coast."¹² The donation was even mentioned in a newspaper article.¹³

Christoffel Fredrik Koch, who was 48 years old by the time of donation, had had a long military career in the Dutch colonial army. Born in 1822 in The Hague, he enrolled in the Dutch military in 1836, enlisted in the Dutch colonial army ten years later, and arrived in Batavia in 1847. Originally stationed on Sumatra's West Coast, Koch took part in colonial expeditions on Borneo's West Coast (West Kalimantan) in 1853-1855 and Borneo's Southeast Coast (South Kalimantan), the region around Banjarmasin, in 1860-1861.

⁸ "Sluiting Bronbeek is definitief. Staatssecretaris neemt alle twijfels weg", *Nieuwsblad van het Noorden*, January 31, 1979; "Natuurlijk moet Bronbeek blijven," *Algemeen Dagblad*, January 4, 1982.

⁹ Rijksmuseum, Inventarisboek Geschiedenis 1977-1995, letter of W.R. Van der Weide to J.B. Kist, 14 October 1977 nr. 72/77.

¹⁰ Curators Harm Steevens of the Rijksmuseum and Pauljac Verhoeven of the Bronbeek museum agree that the flags are technically still in possession of Bronbeek, making the 1977 transfer a temporary loan rather than a donation. In either case, the flags remain in possession of the Dutch state.

¹¹ Rijksmuseum, Inventariskaart NG-1977-279-15-1.

¹² NL-HaNA, KdK 1841-1897, 2.02.04, inv.nr. 1894, 7 April nr. 8, Driemaandelijksch verslag van het Koloniaal Militair Invalidenhuis: "Van den gepensionneerden Luitenant-Kolonel Ch.F. Koch, woonachtig te 's Hage, Vier geweren, twee donderbussen uit de Passoema Landen benevens drie vlaggen waarvan er twee behoren tot de Expeditie tegen de Chinese oproerlingen in 1854 ter Borneo'se West-Kust, en een, de vlag van Pangerang Hijdajit, hoofd opstandeling op Borneo's Zuid en Oost-Kust."

¹³ "Bij het Koloniaal Militair Invalidenhuis," *Het Vaderland, Staat- en Letterkundig Nieuwsblad*, May 10, 1871, 2.

Climbing to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in 1862, he was awarded with the Military William Order 4th class in 1855 for operations in Borneo's West Coast and 3rd class in 1863 for operations in Borneo's Southeast Coast.¹⁴ Moreover, between October 1860 and December 1863 Koch was Deputy Assistant Resident of the district of Martapura, a few months after the Dutch had abolished the Banjarese Sultanate and replaced it with residencies governed by Dutch military officials. After four years in Palembang in Sumatra, where he commanded an expedition in the "Passoema landen" southwest of present-day *kabupaten* Lahat, he retired as a military officer in 1868, returned to the Netherlands, and died in Luxemburg in 1877.¹⁵ In the memoirs of the Dutch veteran Louis Lust, Koch is characterised as a cruel and pitiless commander who did not seem to spare the local population in his campaigns against Banjarese and Dayak fighters.¹⁶

Considering the stated locations of origin of Koch's donations (the "Passoema landen" on Borneo's West Coast and Borneo's Southeast Coast) and the nature of these objects (flags and weapons), Koch's collection behavior seems to be related to his military career. This was also the case with the flag from "Fort Romanio."

This name refers to two improvised fortifications, or *benteng*, a smaller and a larger one. They were erected near the village of Ampah, east of the Barito river, in the present-day *kabupaten* Barito Timur. In Dutch sources we find various spelling variants such as Romanio, Roumanio, Ramonia, Rawonie and Kamonia, and references to a historical settlement named Tandjong Allang. Of all the variants, Ramonia is most used.



Photo 3: Artist impression, created in the Netherlands by C.C.A. Last (1808-1876), of the Ramonia benteng in Van Rees, *De Bandjermasinsche Krijg*, part II, 154-155.

¹⁴ Moed, *Beleid en Trouw, Verzameling van Dagorders, van 1818 t/m heden* (Batavia: Topografische Dienst, 1939) 145, 221, 239.

¹⁵ NL-HaNA, Oorlog / Stamboeken Officieren KL, 2.13.04, inv.nr. 393, Stamboek folio 139, Christoffel Fredrik Koch.

¹⁶ A. Prell, *Taptoe! Herinneringen van Oud-Soldaten en Invaliden van het Indische Leger te Bronbeek* (Amsterdam: Van Holkema&Warendorf, n.d.[1904]), 70-72.

According to contemporary Dutch reports that give day-to-day accounts of the military actions in the region, such as Van Rees' *De Bandjermasinsche Krijg* based on weekly residents' reports, and Luchtmans' "Verslag van den togt der kolonne van Vloten" based on personal memory, the conquest of Ramonia was part of a larger expedition against the Banjarese Prince Antasari. Within the Banjarmasin Sultanate, Antasari was a descendant of the usurped royal family of 1786 and he had supported the first attacks on Dutch positions in April and May 1859 [see the report of the Banjarmasin Diamond NG-C-2000-3]. In the beginning of the war against the Dutch, he had stayed in Benua Lima (near Amuntai) but after the Dutch occupied this area in February 1860, he moved to the Dusun lands where he stayed with his family and teamed up with his powerful Dayak relatives around Tumenggung Surapati. Antasari and Surapati had dealt heavy blows against the Dutch military by sinking warship *De Onrust* in December 1859 and by repelling a first punitive expedition in 1860. In 1861, Antasari had erected a large fortress near Montallat on a hill named Gunung Tongka, from where he tried to organise a united front of Dayak and Banjarese armies against the Dutch.¹⁷

To counter these efforts, the Dutch military commander Verspijck (1822-1909) appointed Captain Van Vloten (1821-1861) to undertake an expedition against Gunung Tongka. The Dutch troops came from the south, with strongholds in Mengkatip and Tameang Layang. The Dutch commanders received messages that rebel armies of around two thousand Dayaks led by "tommongong Hoedjoen" had erected fortifications in the Karau region between Ampah and the Barito river. These fortifications were strategically positioned between the Dutch positions and Antasari's armies near Gunung Tongka, and would potentially attack the Dutch troops from the back. The Dutch commanders decided that these fortifications, among which the two *benteng* of Ramonia, had to be destroyed before the large expedition to Gunung Tongka could commence.¹⁸

On 28 September 1861, a column of 320 men (200 soldiers, along with 120 convicts and contract labourers) under command of Captain Van Vloten attacked the fortresses on the banks of the Karau river. These were defended by around 600 men, led by a few Dayak princes.¹⁹ Both fortresses were stormed and taken, at the expense of five deaths and 35 wounded on the Dutch side, and 17 deaths and an unknown number of wounded troops on Dayak side.²⁰ According to Luchtmans (1834-1912), who was a medic (*officier van gezondheid*) and who wrote a report of the expedition to Ramonia, three yellow flags waved on the palisades of the larger *benteng*. These flags were decorated with a crescent, star, and koranic verses. After the battle, these three flags were captured, along with "two lilla's [cannons], two blunderbusses, seven riffles, half a powder keg, a gong-gong, several pikes and headhunting tools [?]."²¹ Van Vloten was very satisfied with the outcome of the battle and wrote a mention in dispatches (*dagorder*). Among many other soldiers, one corporal, Roelof Jans de With (1835-1866), was awarded

¹⁷ Sjamsuddin, "Fighting Dutch Rule", 175-184.

¹⁸ NL-HaNA, Koloniën, 1850-1900, 2.10.02, inv.nr. 1125, 29 November 1861, nr. 6: Report of the resident of Southeast Borneo of 21 sept 1861.

¹⁹ Van Rees, *De Bandjermasinsche Krijg*, part II, 153; G. Luchtmans, "Militaire Geneeskunde, a. Verslag van den togt der kolonne van Vloten, in de Karrau-landen, Zuider en Oosterafdeeling van Borneo, van den 17en September tot en met den 14en October 1861," *Geneeskundig Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch Indië* X (1863), 15.

²⁰ About the course of the battle around Ramonia, see: "Banjermassing," *Oostpoort, Soerabajasche Courant*, October 21, 1861, 4; in Memoriam of the "Officers of the column against the Montalah," *Bataviaasch Handelsblad*, November 13, 1861, 1; Van Rees, *De Bandjermasinsche Krijg*, part II, 154-156; Luchtmans, "Militaire Geneeskunde," 15-19.

²¹ Luchtmans, "Militaire Geneeskunde," 16, 19: "Drie vlaggen, twee lillas, twee donderbussen, zeven geweren, een half vaatje kruid, een gong-gong, verscheidene lansen en koppensnellers vielen in onze handen."

with the Military William Order 4th class because “at the storming of the larger fortification in Ramonia, he was the first to climb the palisades and take down one enemy flag.”²²

It is unlikely that Christoffel Fredrik Koch was present at the attack on the *benteng* of Ramonia. In September 1861, he was Deputy Assistant Resident of the district of Martapura. At that time, he was also major of the 9th Battalion Infantry, and thus one of the superiors of Captain Van Vloten who led the expedition, and Corporal Jans de With who captured one of the flags.²³ One of the captured flags often ended up with Major Koch because he was the highest in command.

Hidayat and the yellow flags

On the basis of Dutch military sources, we must refute the claim that the flag belonged to “Pangerang Hijdajit,” who we recognise as Prince Hidayatullah, the main contender to the Sultan’s throne. The battle around Ramonia was part of a larger expedition against Antasari in Gunung Tongka. The region around Ramonia, the Karau region, was in the hands of local Dayak princes on the side of Surapati, who was related to Antasari in the north. A few of them are mentioned by Luchtmans and Van Rees: pangeran Karta Melayang Moestapha [Kartas Melagang/Melayong], Anta [Nata] Kasoema, Maas Djoeda [Joeda] Kasoema, and tommonggong Anoem.²⁴ None of them were related to Hidayatullah. In fact, if we follow Van Rees’ account, it seems that around the time of the battles against Ramonia and Gunung Tongka, Hidayatullah was in hiding in the region between Martapura and Amandit, more than 100 kilometers distance from Ramonia and not connected to the Karau region by waterways.

²² NL-HaNA, Kanselarij Nederlandse Orden, 2.02.32, inv.nr. 282, Inschrijvingsregister ridders MWO 4^e klasse, 7 March 1863, nr. 68, 3818: “Bij de bestorming der groote versterking te Ramonia, was hij de eerste die de palissadering beklom en eene der vijandelijke vlaggen nederhaalde.” The author wants to thank John Klein Nagelvoort for sharing this information.

²³ Information about the military hierarchy around the battle of Ramonia is derived from Van Rees, *De Bandjermasinsche Krijg*, part II, 154-156. However, as John Klein Nagelvoort has pointed out in an interview with the author, it is highly unlikely that De With was rewarded for his action while his superiors, Captain Van Vloten and several lieutenants, were not. This suggests that Van Rees’ description of the hierarchy in situ is not accurate.

²⁴ Van Rees, *De Bandjermasinsche Krijg*, part II, 153; Luchtmans, “Militaire Geneeskunde,” 15.

Photo 4: At the red arrows, the Ramonia bentengs and Antasari's stronghold Gunung Tongka. In yellow the Dutch base in Tameang Layang and lines of attack. At the blue arrows, the areas where Hidayatullah was seen between 10 July 1861 and 11 November 1861. Extract from map in G.B. Hooyer, *De krijgsgeschiedenis van Nederlandsch-Indië, van 1811 tot 1894*, part II (Den Haag: De Gebr. van Cleef 1895) map no. 24.

The erroneous attribution of the flag to Hidayatullah may have been a mistake of Koch, when he donated the flag to Bronbeek. On 30 April 1860, Koch himself raided the home of Hidayatullah who had fled, leaving behind many of his belongings.²⁵ In other periods, as well, Koch or some of his army units engaged in direct confrontations with Hidayatullah. Another possibility could be that the Ramonia flag got mixed up with other captured flags and war booty in Bronbeek. The Bronbeek flag collection in the Rijksmuseum has been renumbered several times, and in relation to other flags, curators have found inaccuracies and incorrect attributions.

Another aspect of the flag that raises questions is its colour. The present-day colour of the flag in the Rijksmuseum is brown-green, with red and brown-yellow margins and decorated with a sun, crescent, and a red ribbon. Luchtmans writes about three yellow flags that were decorated with a crescent, star, and koranic verses.²⁶ Whether all three flags were similarly decorated cannot be deduced from Luchtmans' report, so the absence of Quranic verses on the flag in the Rijksmuseum should not alarm us. However, the yellow colour in Luchtmans' description is essential. It corresponds with descriptions of Antasari's flags in other contemporary sources. Van Rees, for instance, mentions "a yellow flag with two

²⁵ Van Rees, *De Bandjermasinsche Krijg*, part I, 205.

²⁶ Luchtmans, "Militaire Geneeskunde," 16, 19.

crossed swords” that was captured from Antasari’s troops on 2 September 1861, and a yellow flag on Antasari’s main fortress Gunung Tongka on 6 November 1861.²⁷ Le Rütte and Tihon, who both participated in the expedition to Gunung Tongka also mention yellow flags in their memoirs of the expedition.²⁸ In the Banjarese poem *Syair Perang Wangkang*, which describes the military campaign against Wangkang (a loyal follower of the Antasari family) from the perspective of Haji Sulaiman who was forced into an alliance with the Dutch, we find a “*bendera kuning tanda raja*” (a yellow Sultan’s flag, K.S.) that was captured from Wangkang by Banjarese troops loyal to the Dutch.²⁹ Finally, according to Meijer and Van Rees, Panembahan Aling and Sultan Koening, who fought in Antasari’s name, also used yellow flags.³⁰

On the basis of old depictions of the flag, we can conclude that the present day green colour of the flag in the Rijksmuseum is the result of discolouration of the organic dyes of the flag. A memorial volume about Bronbeek from 1881 by Johannes Smits offers some insight.³¹ Smits was Bronbeek’s first commander between 1862 and 1887, also at the time of Koch’s donation. In his book he discussed the most important war trophies in Bronbeek, richly illustrated with lithographs by Van Looy and Van Looy, Jr. Image number 5 in the book (fig. 6) depicts four flags, three of which were attributed to Ramonia. The image does not show distinctive details or unique shapes, and flag number NG-1977-279-15-1 cannot be recognised. However, on image number 25 (fig. 7), the Rijksmuseum flag is easily recognisable. The images in Smits’ *Gedenkboek* are monochrome black and white, but Museum Bronbeek possesses the preliminary studies of Van Looy and Van Looy, Jr. which were vividly coloured. On the pre-study of image number 25 (fig. 8), the flag has a bright yellow colour and red and white margins.

In the memorial volume, Smits relates the flags on image number 25 (fig. 7) to a military campaign during the Aceh war: the conquest and destruction of the mosque of Lambadak (Lambadah, present-day Lambada Lhok) by the Dutch colonial army in January 1877. According to Smits, three flags were taken during that event and donated to Bronbeek by General Major A.E.J. Diemont in 1878.³² Later, Bronbeek curators ascribed three other flags in the Rijksmuseum collection to Lambadak.³³ More importantly, we can relate the symbol of the red ribbon to the troops of Antasari and Surapati. Whereas the crescent moon and the eight-pointed star are very common symbols throughout the Islamic world, this ribbon is more puzzling. At first sight, the symbol may be confused with the well-known Zulfiqar, the scissor-like double bladed sword of Ali ibn Abi Talib which is often depicted on flags in the Malay world, but Zulfiqar symbols on contemporary flags in the Banjarmasin area were usually depicted more graphically.³⁴ Instead, Dutch anthropologist Martin van Bruinessen points out that they are probably the Arabic letters *lam* and *alif*, which together form the first word, “la,” of the Islamic confession of faith, the *shahada*.³⁵

²⁷ Van Rees, *De Bandjermasinsche Krijg*, part II, 138, 189.

²⁸ J.M.C.E. Le Rütte, *Expeditie tegen de versterking van Pangeran Antasarie* (Leiden: A.W. Sythoff, 1863), 100; G.L.C. Tihon, “Tongka, Zuid- en Oostkust van Borneo,” *Militaire Spectator* (1863): 118.

²⁹ Haji Sulaiman, *Syair perang Wangkang*, trans. Putri Minerva Mutiara (Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1979), 38.

³⁰ J.J. Meijer, “Voor veertig jaren te Bandjermasin,” *De Indische Gids, Staat- en Letterkundig Maandschrift* 21, nr. 1 (1899): 665; Van Rees, *De Bandjermasinsche Krijg*, part II, 45.

³¹ J.C.J. Smits, *Gedenkboek van het Koloniaal-Militair Invalidenhuis Bronbeek* (Arnhem: Uitgeverij P. Gouda Quint, 1881).

³² Smits, *Gedenkboek*, 66, 74.

³³ Rijksmuseum, Inventarisboek Geschiedenis 1977-1995, letter of W.R. Van der Weide to J.B. Kist, 14 October 1977 nr. 72/77; it concerns the flags with object numbers NG-1977-279-3, NG-1977-279-4-1 and NG-1977-279-5-1.

³⁴ Mohd Zahamri, “Ikongrafi Zulfiqar dalam Sejarah Hubungan Turki dan Nusantara,” *Suhuf* 4, no. 1 (2011): 111-141. See for instance NMVW object number RV-225-10b.

³⁵ Email from Martin Bruinessen, professor of contemporary Muslim societies, to Mirjam Shatanawi, 17 January 2021.

Banjarese historian Mansyur Sammy also reads the symbol as a stylistic combination of the letters *lam* and *alif*, called *lam jalalah*, which refers to the name of Allah. He indicates that this symbol was often used in the Banjar war as a mystical emblem that was attached to fortresses to invoke divine protection. According to Mansyur, prince Antasari had *lam jalalah* depicted on several amulets and on war flags.³⁶ In this regard, it is interesting that another flag in the Rijksmuseum collection, flag number NG-1977-279-18-1, carries an identical ribbon (see figure 9). This flag was reportedly captured after the conquest of a fortress at Sungai “Kawattan” (a substream of Sungai Kapuas Murung), which was occupied by troops of Surapati, Antasari’s relative and comrade-in-arms.³⁷

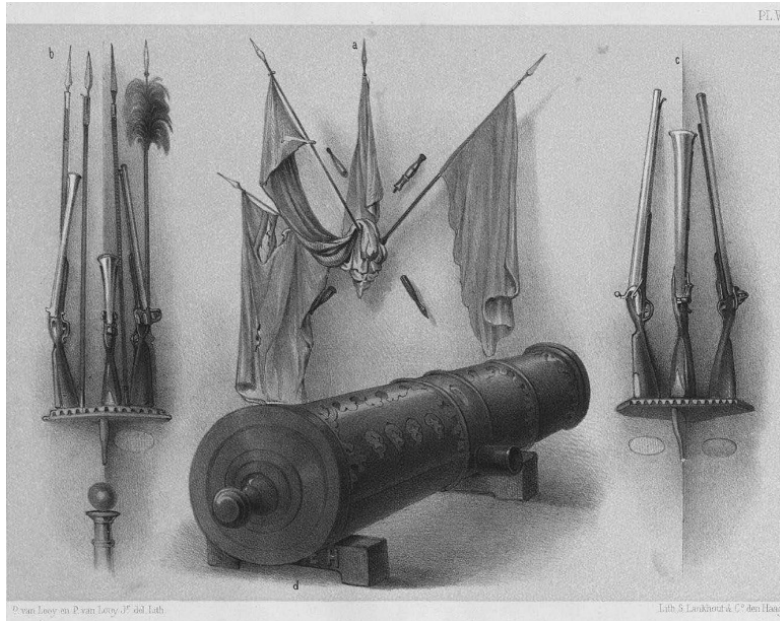


Photo 5: Three Ramonia flags and one from Palembang. Lithograph by Van Looy and Van Looy jr. in: Smits, *Gedenkboek*, 14-15.

³⁶ Email from Mansyur Sammy, expert of Banjarese history and culture, 9 April 2021.

³⁷ Meijners, “Gevecht te Soengei-Kawattan,” 386, 391.

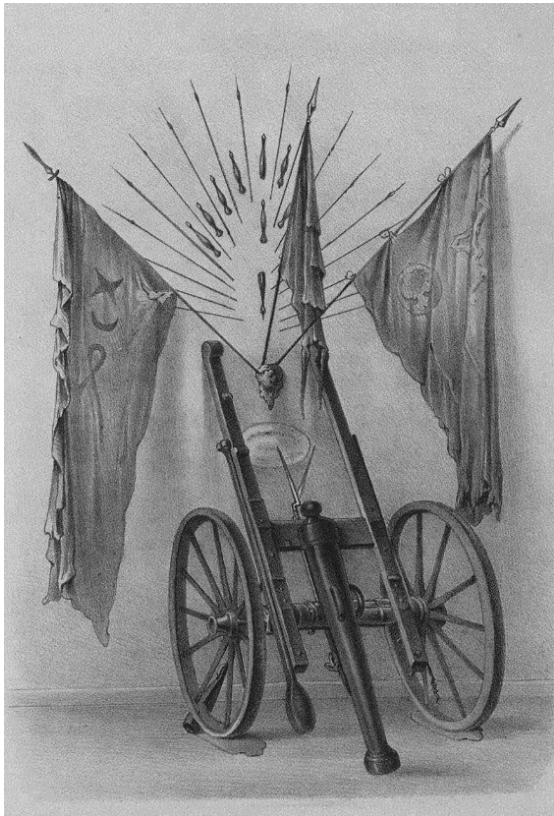


Photo 6: On the left a resembling flag with ribbon, reportedly from Lambadak, Aceh. Lithograph by Van Looy and Van Looy, Jr. in: Smits, *Gedenkboek*, 74-75.



Photo 7: a pre-study of Van Looy and Van Looy Jr. Museum Bronbeek.



Photo 8: Flag number NG-1977-279-18-1 with a similar ribbon, reportedly conquered in the battle near Soengai Kawattan in November 1865, see also Bronbeek flag 1482

Conclusion

In conclusion, on the basis of archival research and contemporary literature, there is no reason to question the seizure of flags in Ramonia on 28 September 1861, and the donation of one of these flags to Bronbeek by Koch in October 1870. An 1881 memorial volume about Bronbeek by Johannes Smits raises questions because he attributes flag number NG-1977-279-15-1 to the conquest of Lambadak, Aceh, in 1877. However, later Bronbeek sources such as the list provided by Van der Weide attribute different flags to Lambadak.³⁸ Moreover, the colour and features of the flag and the symbol of the red ribbon are consistent with contemporary sources about the conquest of Ramonia, and Mansyur Sammy recognises the character as a common symbol of Prince Antasari.

The attribution of the Ramonia-flag to Hidayatullah is erroneous because at the time of the conquest of Ramonia this prince was seen in other regions of South Kalimantan. Instead, an analysis of the military context in September 1861 and the symbolism on the flag indicates that it was captured from troops loyal to Surapati and Antasari, the latter of whom is today regarded as a National Hero of Indonesia.

³⁸ Rijksmuseum, Inventarisboek Geschiedenis 1977-1995, letter of W.R. Van der Weide to J.B. Kist, 14 October 1977 nr. 72/77.